



EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT

2009 - 2014

---

*Session document*

---

23.11.2010

B7-0642/2010

## MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for the debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 122 of the Rules of Procedure

on Tibet: plans to institute Chinese as the main language of education

**Charles Tannock, Michał Tomasz Kamiński, Tomasz Piotr Poręba, Marek Henryk Migalski, Ryszard Czarnecki, Adam Bielan, Roberts Zile, Konrad Szymański**

on behalf of the ECR Group

**European Parliament resolution on Tibet: plans to institute Chinese as the main language of education**

*The European Parliament,*

- having regard to its numerous previous resolutions on the human rights situation in China, and its resolutions on Tibet, in particular its resolution of 2 April 2008,
  - having regard to Rule 122 of its Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas respect for human rights, the freedom of identity, culture and religion is a founding principle of the European Union and a priority of the European Union's foreign policy,
- B. whereas there is a lack of notable progress in talks between the representatives of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities, addressing core issues such as the preservation of Tibet's unique culture, religion and traditions and the need to achieve a system of meaningful autonomy for Tibet within the Chinese Constitution,
- C. whereas the Tibetan language, as one of the four oldest and most indigenous languages of Asia, is a fundamental catalyst for Tibetan identity, culture and religion,
- D. whereas Chinese officials have recently proposed reforms of the education system which plan to restrict the use of Tibetan language in national elementary and middle schools by changing the language medium of instruction to Chinese and that increases the crackdown on the exercise of cultural, linguistic, religious and other fundamental freedoms of Tibetans,
- E. whereas the protests by Tibetan school and college students over the reforms of the education system spread in October 2010 from several areas of Qinghai to Beijing, involving thousands of Tibetan students who expressed their concern about the downgrading of the Tibetan language,
- F. whereas, as a result of the dominance of the Chinese language, there is growing anxiety over job prospects among graduate students in Tibetan areas as, according to the petition signed by teachers and students, most Tibetan students have never been in a Chinese-language environment and are therefore unable to communicate in Chinese,
1. Expresses its concern about the repression, marginalization and erosion of Tibetan language, the bedrock of Tibetan identity, religion and culture;
  2. Stresses the fact that, for a successful bilingual education, the introduction of Chinese as the non-native language must be gradual and, while learning Chinese is essential for students in Tibet today, the main language medium for teaching should remain Tibetan;
  3. Calls on the Chinese Government to preserve and protect the distinct cultural, religious and national identity of the six million Tibetan people and therefore to support a genuine bilingual language policy, in which the teaching of the Chinese language is strengthened but all subjects are taught through the Tibetan language medium;
  4. Draws attention to the Constitution of China and the Law on Regional National Autonomy which guarantees the freedom of nationalities to use and develop their own spoken and written languages and Article 10 of the Law on Regional National Autonomy provides that these organs "shall

guarantee the freedom of the nationalities in these areas to use and develop their own spoken and written languages";

5. Asks the Chinese Government to ensure that the rights of peaceful expression of views by peaceful demonstrations by the students are respected, and that the relevant authorities address their grievances substantively and appropriately;
6. Urges both the Chinese Government and the Dalai Lama to continue and intensify the dialogue with an open spirit and with a view to achieving a durable solution in Tibet, and, as part of their dialogue process, to specify issues of language and education as spelled out in the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy;
7. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the President and Prime Minister of the People's Republic of China, the President of the Chinese People's National Congress, and His Holiness the Dalai Lama.